

Robert G. Taub  
Acting Chairman  
Postal Regulatory Commission  
901 New York Avenue NW, Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20268-0001

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POSTAL REGULATORY  
COMMISSION  
4100 K STREET, N.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20541

Docket No. A2015-1

Dear Chairman Taub,

We are writing to voice our continued support for the Yantic Post Office, one of the most economically critical and financially viable post offices in Connecticut's Second District. As Ms. Elisabeth Shellan, the Public Representative for this case, voiced in her May 11 recommendation to the commission, the United States Postal Service's (USPS) decision to close this post office was made without adequate concern for local services, disregards the profitability of this location, and failed to give local residents fair opportunity to voice their opinions on closure. Furthermore, USPS did not consider viable relocation options that would have maintained the benefits of keeping the Yantic Post Office operational.

A primary concern in deciding which post offices should be closed is minimizing the disruption to the local community. The Yantic Post Office was conveniently located just outside of the Stanley Israelite Business Park, a 450-acre site that houses a diverse array of businesses and services large and small. These include a Connecticut Army National Guard recruiting center, offices for telecommunications companies like AT&T and Comcast, a local branch of Charter Oak Federal Credit Union, and even our region's minor league baseball team, the Connecticut Tigers. Discontinuing services at the Yantic Post Office will force these organizations to seek needed services elsewhere at more distant locations, diminishing productivity and harming economic prospects for this area.

The large number of businesses located in such close proximity to the Yantic Post Office also helped the office maintain profitability at a level uncommon for eastern Connecticut. We dispute the Postal Service's finding that the Yantic Post Office closure will save \$757,855, as that savings was largely the result of the postmaster's relocation to a different facility. The relocation does not constitute any savings, as the postmaster remains on the USPS payroll. After properly accounting for the postmaster's relocation, we find that the Yantic Post Office was indeed self-supporting and, in fact, created a profit – revenues over the last ten years were in excess of \$2 million according to financial reviews. Therefore, the decision does not fairly meet the Postal Service's requirement to consider their economic savings resulting from closure or consolidation.

Additionally, Title 39 of the U.S. Code, which established the modern Postal Service and explicitly detailed its authority to close post offices, states that the USPS must consider "the effect of closing or consolidation on the community served by such post office." A critical aspect of that process is seeking input from the local community. While a public comment period took place, it is clear from the process in which this closure took place that the USPS had pre-determined their decision to close the Yantic Post Office. We encourage the commission to carefully consider the numerous points raised by Ms. Shellan in her recommendation, which clearly illustrates the unwillingness of USPS to listen to the concerns of local

citizens, and wholeheartedly agree with her assertion that the Postal Service's "goal in post office closing proceedings should be meaningful public participation."

While the USPS raised concerns about safety and security at the Yantic site, we would encourage the Postal Service to consider an alternative to closing this post office permanently. The local area includes many business locations that would meet USPS' needs, including moving into the Stanley Israelite Business Park. Such an opportunity would both address the Postal Service's concerns about safety and security, as well as provide consistent access to local citizens and businesses.

We understand that the Postal Regulatory Commission faces a difficult challenge in ensuring the continued fiscal viability of the Postal Service while maintaining service levels for local communities. However, it is clear to us in this case that the USPS has failed to meet their statutory procedural requirements that guarantee all citizens' voices are heard and that it has not fully considered all relevant facts in this matter. Therefore, we strongly recommend that the commission remand USPS' decision in favor of further consideration of alternatives that would continue service at this location.

We appreciate your consideration in this matter, and look forward to hearing your decision in the coming weeks.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Joe Courtney".

Joe Courtney  
U.S. Representative, CT-02

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Debercy Hinchey".

Debercy Hinchey  
Mayor, City of Norwich